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To the medical profession.

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of Dr. J. Marion Sims from the
woman's Hospital - New York.



Peaslee (E.R.); Emmet (J.A.) & Thomas (J.)

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Statements respecting the Separation of Dr. J. MARION SIMS from the Woman's Hospital, New York.

In November, 1874, Dr. J. Marion Sims tendered his resignation as a member of the Medical Board of the Woman's Hospital above mentioned; since which time insinuations—and more recently, distinct charges—have been widely circulated, of unworthy conduct in connection with that matter, of ourselves as his colleagues in that Board. Had they been confined to New York, where all the parties concerned are well known, we should still have remained silent; but the recent extensive distribution to the profession in this country of a biographical sketch containing such charges, compels us, in justice to ourselves and to the Woman's Hospital, to make the following statement of facts:

In January, 1874, the Board of Governors of the Woman's Hospital, passed the two following regulations: 1st. That no cases of Carcinoma Uteri should be admitted into the Hospital; and 2d. That not more than fifteen spectators, in addition to the Hospital Staff, should be present at any operation. The Medical Board formally discussed these rules and decided *unanimously* to abide by them, as being called for, and conducive to the best interests of patients and of the Hospital—Dr. Sims voting affirmatively with the undersigned. And from this time the Board worked, as it had previously done, in entire harmony, so far as we were aware, until Dr. Sims resigned, several months afterwards.

As the Medical Board is required to make its Annual Report at the Anniversary Meeting of the Hospital in November, said report was on the preceding day presented by the Secretary, as usual, to each member of this Board for examination, alteration and indorsement; and was *unanimously* approved, without any suggestion of alteration by any member of the Board. It alluded specially to the regulation respecting the number of spectators, stating that "the Medical Board desires, and has ever desired, in the interest of the patients and of themselves, that the number of the spectators should be limited," and "announces its determination to do its utmost to observe the law that had been passed."

On the following day, after the customary exercises of the anniversary meeting, including the reading of said report, were concluded, Dr. Sims rose and delivered a speech severely reflecting upon the tyrannical course of the Board of Governors, as he termed it, in establishing the two rules above specified—and which, as has been seen, he had himself unqualifiedly indorsed; said he would no longer submit to such treatment, and threatened to resign unless the Board of Governors rescinded these rules at their next meeting. Col. Davis, a member of that Board, after expressing his regret that Dr. Sims had obtruded his private grievances on that occasion, replied at some length, when the meeting adjourned.



The undersigned were surprised and astonished at the course taken by Dr. Sims, and in conversation with the members of the Board of Governors and the Lady Managers, after the adjournment, disclaimed all sympathy with it, as an unwarrantable misrepresentation of the feelings of the Medical Board. In a few weeks the regular meeting of the Board of Governors was held, and Dr. Sims' resignation was unanimously accepted.

The charges above alluded to are, that we urged Dr. Sims to a bold and dignified stand for the interests and the honor of the profession; and then meanly deserted him "in the time of conflict."

Each of these charges is unqualifiedly false. We neither urged nor suggested *any* course to Dr. Sims, he having acted entirely unexpectedly to us. Nor did the issue he made touch the interest or the honor of the profession at all. He made it entirely on his own account and for his own personal reasons, some of which were given in his speech. We may also remark that he had at no time been the recognized champion or spokesman of the Medical Board, and that he admitted he was speaking for himself at the time.

In regard to deserting Dr. Sims in the time of conflict, we merely say that we could scarcely stultify ourselves so far as to defend him in his violent contradictions both of the letter and the spirit of the report of the Medical Board, which he, with ourselves, had only 24 hours before, agreed to in every particular. We could only deplore his inconsistency and regret its consequences; but not interfere, unasked, in his own business.

If, therefore, Dr. Sims is to be a martyr in connection with this affair, we protest against his being regarded by the profession as one of our making.

E. R. PEASLEE,

T. A. EMMET,

T. GAILLARD THOMAS.

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